

THE SOUTHEAST'S PREMIERE MUSIC MAGAZINE



Musician  
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FLORIDA EDITION

VOLUME THREE  
- ISSUE 3

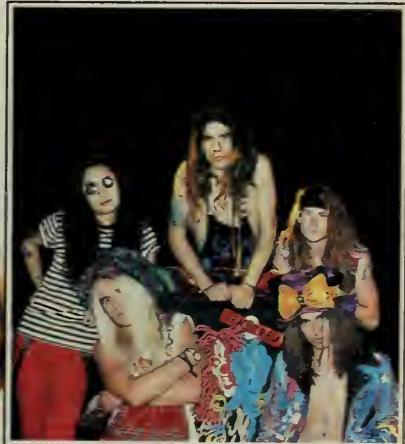


APRIL

# DIVINYLS

INTERVIEW

plus:  
New Wave of  
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New Product Guide  
Ethnic Gospel  
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# THRUST

VOLUME 3 NO. 3  
APRIL 1991



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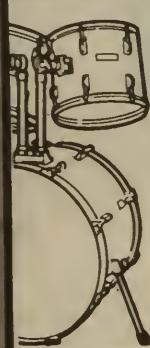
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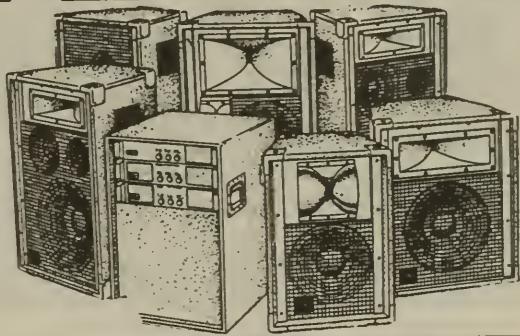
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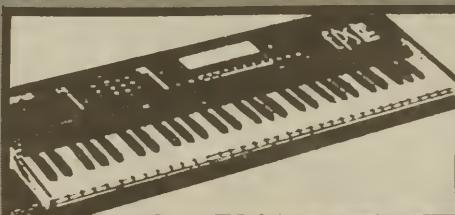
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# STREET NOTES

## CHRISTOPHER ROBIN

Thus month *Street Notes* goes on the road to Austin, Texas for the 5th Annual South by Southwest (SXSW) Music Conference. The largest showcase of unsigned bands in the U.S., SXSW featured over 500 bands and artists over four non-stop nights.

They say everything is bigger in Texas. I don't know who "they" are, but they must have been hanging out in Austin when they said it. I have never seen a metropolis embrace its musical community in such an overwhelming fashion.

On Friday night, Austin's main music strip (6th Street) had to be barricaded off from traffic to protect the music lovers. Over 10,000 people were on the strip supporting live, original music. Over 10,000 people partied responsibly while the police on horseback kicked back and made sure there were no problems. Of course, as I was told from many local residents, there are seldom any problems. Fans of rock, alternative, blues, reggae, dance and jazz all intermingled peacefully yet powerfully. The vibe was infectious and overwhelmingly omniscient. Austin has the muse.

It didn't matter if your band was showcasing for SXSW or not. It didn't even matter if you had a band. Old men, young girls and everyone in between had picked up their acoustic guitars, mini-amps, washboards and whatever else could spread the muse. Every corner had these street corner troubadours. Hell, people were even sitting cross legged in the middle of the blocked off street playing, singing and dancing. The oddest, yet most fun experience I had was courtesy of Sam the Flower Man, who offered us a make-shift percussion ensemble of cattle bones. For thirty minutes, we stormed up a mean bone boogie which had everybody walking by smiling and waving. At one point over fifteen people were standing on the corner, beating their bones. Sam the Flower Man conducted the most primal of rhythm sections as his feet perched on upside-down 5 gallon buckets — Romper Stompers attached to his feet. At one point, noticing Sam's "Uncle Sam" hat and the energy in the air, I wondered if Haight-Ashbury had felt the same vibe twenty-five years ago.

I'm from Los Angeles and I've experienced what many brag is the best music scene in the world; and you know what, we were all wrong. The music scene in Austin has more energy and more importantly, none of the pretentiousness known to come with the big music meccas.

I spoke to representatives from the Texas Chamber of Commerce at the SXSW Trade

Show. They informed me that the music scene I witnessed was not just because of the 3000 industry professionals and musicians who had descended upon the town for SXSW. Far from it. From every perspective, Austin progressively supports its entertainment. Its large college population certainly triggers smiles from Austin club owners, but even in the summer, the strip quickly fills to capacity. The police have a year-long job blocking off the strip on Friday and Saturday nights.

But an entertainment age crowd would have nowhere to go if the city itself did not lend support. If the police, zoning commissioners, city council and other city officials did not also embrace the scene, it would have no space to exist. Actually, Austin is pretty smart. If 10,000 music fans spend \$20 apiece on the 6th Street strip, almost 1/4 million dollars is funneled into their local economy. And that's each night.

It doesn't surprise me that Texas hosts the most progressive musical community in the nation. Stevie Ray Vaughan found the muse in Austin. ZZ Top spoke of the power of La Grange. Music is in the soul of Texas so I guess it's only fitting that the best musical community (possibly in the world) is our neighbor.

At this point you're probably thinking, "Enough about Texas. What does all this have to do with me in Florida and Georgia?" It's elementary. If the musical communities of Atlanta, Miami, Orlando, Tampa and every other metropolis in the Southeast supported music 25% as much as the people in Austin (which only has a population of 585,000 people) we would all be much stronger than we are currently.

Look at Austin one more time. 28 clubs are in the metropolitan area. Most of these are located in a 4 block stretch. 80% of these clubs do not allow bands to do cover material. Think about it. Is there 80% original music every day of the week where you live? I doubt it. Most likely, on any given night you'll find 80% cover music and 20% original music.

I know it's true in Tampa and Orlando and I've been told it's true in Miami and Atlanta. Original music is given lip service one night of the week in the clubs and then it's such a limited genre that there's no possible way for it to succeed. In other club situations, original music is a privilege only afforded to established (read: guaranteed draw) bands.

Now I don't mean to put this whole problem on the club owners, managers or bookers. They're businessmen, and their number one

priority is not to support music (whether original or cover tunes) but to make money. If the club owner thinks he will get more people out to listen to Van Halen covers than originals, he is going to book a cover band. If any club owner in the Southeast thought he could make more money by booking original acts, he'd do it in a heartbeat.

As a music fan, this is where your part comes in. In your metropolitan area, there may be upwards of 50,000 people who love to see live music. Imagine just 25% of those people out on any given night supporting the music scene. It could fill all the clubs in your area every single night.

There's more though. You must be vocal in your support. Tell your club owners that you will only support them when they support original music. They may not pay attention at first but when the cash register starts ringing for original nights and stops ringing on cover nights, the message will ring loud and clear.

Let your city leaders know that they must allow a scene to grow. If curfews, noise ordinances, zoning restrictions and condemnation of original music are allowed to be enforced, there will never be the fertile soil that a musical community can grow in.

The attitude will change, the scene will change and the economy will grow. And as original songs are supported more and more, young musicians and bands will start to look into themselves for music, coming up with tunes as powerful as anything you've ever heard. More bands will spring up, further surging the original music scene even more. Everybody will win.

Think of the snowball at the top of the hill. No matter in what direction you roll it, it will increase in magnitude and force. We are all at the top of the hill right now. Let's all give the catalytic push needed to nurture a thriving musical community in each town and city in the Southeast.

The next Stevie Ray Vaughan or Janis Joplin may come from your town. It won't happen if they can't tap into the muse. They can't tap into the muse by playing "Freebird" or "Stairway to Heaven." Support your original scene now and it can become what Austin is. If not it will die.

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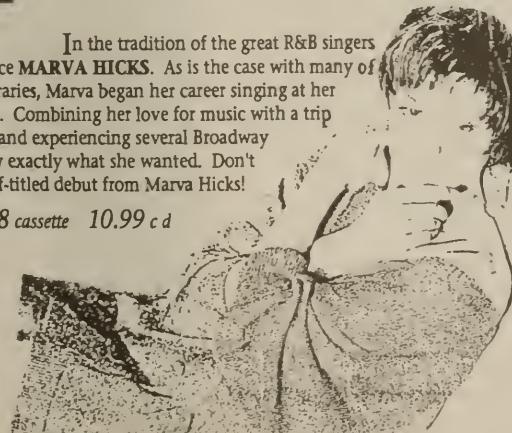
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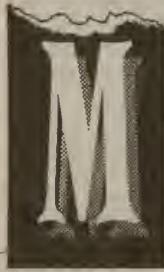
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# Divinyls

## A Interview By John Everard



Most people thought Divinyls had gone the way of fellow countrymen Men At Work and Rick Springfield — pop anomalies whose careers soared quickly, and broke down just as quickly in the early '80s. But Divinyls were troopers — they didn't go away. They've been plugging at the edge of the rock scene for years now, trying to recapture their momentum, trying to snag that big break.

Christina Amphlett and Mark McEntee formed Divinyls over a decade ago. They started out on the fast track; within a year of getting together they put out *Monkey Grip* in Australia. They became the fourth Aussie band (says Amphlett) to be signed directly to an American label (Chrysalis). With a new lineup, they released *Desperate* in 1983, their international debut. They found success in the college charts and began touring incessantly.



Three albums and eight years later, Amphlett and McEntee only now seem to have climbed the next rung on the career success ladder. With their self-titled debut on Virgin (their fifth LP), the group is at last enjoying crossover chart success with the risqué lead single "I Touch Myself," and fans are hopping on the wagon to praise this "new band."

"We're not a new band," laughs Amphlett in her New York hotel room. "But people think the Divinyls are a new band now!"

After a decade of being disregarded, a change was definitely in store for the Divinyls. Chrysalis's decision to drop the group may have been a blessing in disguise.

"We got dropped from Chrysalis in 1988 and Mark and I decided to go to Paris in '89 and just have some fun and see what we were going to do," Amphlett says. "Then we started writing and we sent the songs back to our American management and they really liked them; they sent them to Virgin who thought they were really keen. We really liked Virgin — they seemed to understand us."

Amphlett blames much of the band's obscurity on her former label which she says didn't pay much attention to them. They certainly don't have that problem with Virgin, which has

been giving the *big push* to Divinyls.

Leaving behind the players they had worked with in the past, as well as producer Mike Chapman, who'd worked on their previous two LPs, resulted in the band finding new influences and a cleaner sound as they headed into the studio last year. The result has already yielded a number one single in Australia, and the band has just wrapped up a video for "Love School," which will follow "Touch" as a single there. Amphlett says it's still in the air as to what track will be the next U.S. single.

"This record is better for us in the production department," Amphlett admits. "I think on *Temperamental*, things sound a bit buried. I think this one's really sparse and simple and organic. We recorded it live (though we've always done that) and the sounds are really good, the playing is great, the keyboards are very natural and soulful. Everything has its place, nothing interferes. It's just a very organic record."

While Divinyls have really been a duo through much of their history, Amphlett is quick to point out that recording is always a band project with McEntee writing most of the music, and Amphlett penning lyrics.

"The first record we did, *Monkey Grip*, was

with some other guys, and then some of them changed and then *Desperate* and *What A Life* were the same, and then I guess some of them went their own ways for different reasons, or just maybe from the disappointment that we hadn't done better. Then on *Temperamental* we used some different people. We then used different people on this record. So it's been basically Mark and I together through the whole period. It's always been a *band* kind of approach in the studio. Basically Mark writes the music and I write the lyrics. Sometimes we cross over — I just have things in my head, you know, Mark is the technical one."

It seems that the two had some good stuff in their heads when they set out to record *Divinyls*, as well as a great backing band (which includes renowned keyboardist Benmont Tench, bassist Randy Jackson and drummer Charlie Drayton). One would also expect a hit song when songwriters Billy Steinberg and Tom Kelly (who've penned light pop chart toppers for The Bangles, Cyndi Lauper and countless others) show up. But a single that rather obviously addresses female masturbation? This is not their normal turf! Amphlett has worked with Steinberg/Kelly before (they wrote "Like A Cat" for Lauper's last LP), though never for a Divinyls album. The two writers also handed Amphlett the most achingly beautiful ballad to close off the album — "I'm On Your Side."

"They came into the studio when we were recording and played it on acoustic guitar. They actually wrote it for me to sing. I like that song."

She says that "Touch" was written in a restaurant, but hedges at its "meaning."

"We were sitting, writing in a restaurant, and these two girls were listening, and I suppose we were just ... being silly; I don't know. No, we weren't. But it's one of those songs that can be understood on different levels. And I think it's up to the listener's interpretation of that song: if you're a nun, you know, you're going to interpret it in one way, and if you're a stripper you're going to interpret it in another."

Did they hope the titillating nature of it would work to their benefit as did the scandal around Madonna's "Justify My Love"?

"It was a bit of an attention grabber," she admits.

Certainly, the video, though erotic, doesn't approach the shock value of "Justify."

"I don't think there's a lot that's risqué in the video — some people think it is, but you know, I suppose there's a bit of flesh in it and there's a contortionist looking through her legs, touching herself and stuff, upside down ..."

No matter how you interpret it, sexuality oozes from "Touch," and lust is actually a dominate theme on Divinyls. Songs like "Lay Your Body Down," and "Love School" drip sensuality. Even the cover shot features Amphlett wearing nothing but a fishnet dress.



# INXS



But playing the sex symbol isn't what Amphlett is all about. And she doesn't seem overly concerned that the band doesn't yet have the stature of fellow Aussies INXS.

"We've had a lot of support and toured and had fun, so it hasn't been hell," she quips, drawing out the last word. "You just keep on doing it because you enjoy doing it. It's not as if we haven't had fun. We've traveled heaps. I mean, all along we wanted to be an international band ... we have been."

Amphlett says she just hopes the new record does well enough to enable them to tour the world again.

"There's no point in touring if nobody wants to hear you. I've never been one to want to perform for 10 people — I get really shy. The more people, the better!"

When Divinyls first broke onto the international scene, it was during the demise of punk. Now, as they rise again, it looks as if rock & roll itself is in danger of extinction. But Amphlett is unconcerned. She says it only makes her group more necessary.

"It's either heavy metal or rap out there," she says. "It's kind of good because it makes us a little more unique. We've always just done what we do. We've always had lots of melody in our music, we've always been a rock & roll band. I suppose my performance was always a little punky ... because it was confronting, but you know, you just got to do what you do. You can't just check over the trends, or else you lose who you are."

With their roots in Australia, their record company in America, and the site for the recording of Divinyls in France (hence the short instrumental "Cafe Interlude"), the band does seem to have developed a certain rocking cosmopolitan flair. And when it comes to music, England and America provide them with their heroes. Some of the guitar work on the new album even hearkens to (who else) The Beatles.

"You can't help it sometimes to be influenced by The Beatles, I suppose, but I don't think that's a great main influence of ours. Growing up in Australia, you hear from English rock & roll and American rock & roll. And as we've traveled, like when we first started, if we'd do a cover, it would be an Australian band like The Easy Beats or The Loved Ones. But as we've traveled we've kind of broadened our influences. We listen to a lot of old blues, guitar players like B.B. King and John Lee Hooker and stuff like that and your Jeff Beck. I also listen to classical music."

But what about pop? Surely a pop rock band listens to other pop stars.

"No, I don't listen to pop music at all. In fact I hate pop music. We're more of a rock & roll band with some pop. I listen to blues and rock and country music, but I don't listen to pop, pop, pop."

If the music on Divinyls is any indication of the power of listening to the old masters, maybe we should send Expose a crate of Chuck Berry records.

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## The Musician

Alright, say you're brand new in Tinseltown and don't know anyone. A good place to start is the *Music Connection* classifieds. The publication can readily be found throughout the greater Los Angeles area from 7-11 to MBE (Mail Box Etc.) to newsstands to name a few. I recommend subscribing to *Music Connection* no matter what part of the country you live in, especially if you're planning to eventually visit or relocate to Southern California. The mag offers a decent column or two on help-wanted ads and a free "musicians wanted/musicians available" section.

*Music Connection* also runs numerous display ads, which are more useful to groups already performing in the area. The advertising sales reps at *Music Connection* are extremely helpful and cordial, so as soon as your group wants the media and label reps to take heed of your act, contact Nick at (213) 462-7772.

Since this publication caters to music industry personnel more so than the average "club-goer," it is best that you place your advertisements accordingly. I wouldn't advise you to announce your first Hollywood show in a full-page ad. The rationale is simple: before presenting itself to the record biz, every debuting band needs time to work up its confidence and overall stage presence in front of a live audience. ... And I don't mean just a room full of your friends, either. You've got to face the curtain sometimes and see if you can draw fans — and then, of course, keep them.

Advertising is very useful once a band has performed the club circuit for a few months and wants to attract the movers and shakers. Nonetheless, even though you don't need to pack a room in order to obtain the attention of the music industry, it certainly doesn't hurt. So on that note, let me steer you towards BAM Magazine, devoted more to California's typical club and concert goer. Let me just say, however, this does not mean that the readers of the two magazines are not often the same. This leads to the importance of working with a local representative (be it a manager, agent or whatever) who knows all the local publications demographics and circulation, as well as the band's history and situation, to ensure the most economical expenditure of both time and money.

My suggestion is for rock acts (everything from pop to speed metal) to advertise in BAM. This holds true primarily during the initial stages of a band's emergence on the local scene, to help build enough of a following to guarantee future bookings. BAM also has a "personals" section in the back; and classified rates for the "musicians wanted" section are \$5.00 for the first 15 words; other categories are \$15.00 for the first 15 words. For additional information, the person to talk to for ads is Tracey Halloran: (213) 467-7878.

For those bands in the new music, dance and alternative genres, LA Weekly is the best publication in which to advertise. No matter what your musical style, be sure your group is mentioned in the extensive Weekly listings section, which is divided by genre.

Attend as many classes, lectures, seminars and workshops as you can afford, to broaden your knowledge of the record business and network with working artists and entertainment industry experts. In LA, the Concrete Foundations Forum is held each year in September, while the Independent Music Conference is

offered during late spring. Both are actively seeking volunteers for a multitude of tasks who, in return, are comped all activities, panels and showcases. Volunteers learn as they participate, as well as make contacts they otherwise would be unable to. Not a bad trade-out, since seminars of this nature usually cost a couple hundred bucks or more.

Other important music industry conferences on the opposite coast include the New Music Seminar every summer and CMJ Convention in the fall, both held in Manhattan each year.

Most importantly, get out on the streets and schmooze. Meet other acts/musicians and make contacts (not just friends or bandmates) by going to all types of shows at different clubs. Make yourself a regular on the scene; even the most successful of us here in Hollywood were newcomers once!

Although it is ultimately necessary for every newcomer to Hollywood's rock & roll circuit to immerse himself into the local scene to gain familiarity and acceptance, the benefits of "formal" education should never be downplayed. Countless experts engaged in the music biz — otherwise unavailable to local musicians — are at your disposal through the many assemblages offered on a regular basis through the LA area. Countless classes and forums on all aspects of the music business are offered year round; read the local music publications, trades and daily newspapers to stay abreast of what's available.

To acquaint yourself with the various music-related functions going on around the Greater L. A. area, affiliate with professional organizations. The three I most strongly urge all musicians to join are The National Academy of Songwriters (NAS), Los Angeles Songwriters' Showcase (LASS) and the co-ed (in spite of the name) Los Angeles Women in Music (LAWIM).

One of the best resources I've discovered for performers/song-writers/musicians in general — inclusive of beginners as well as those artists considered somewhat established — is the National Academy of Songwriters (NAS). This organization offers bimonthly panels ranging from three to seven members, all veterans of the biz. The topics covered explore various issues prevalent in today's music industry, and a listing of upcoming panels is available by calling (213) 463-7178 (or write NAS, 6381 Hollywood Blvd. #780, Hollywood, CA 90028).

The Los Angeles Songwriter's Showcase offers weekly "pitch-a-thons" for songwriters who are interested in having professionals in the music industry screen their material. LASS provides career counseling, critiquing of songs, referrals and much more to its members. Yearly dues of \$95.00 include "Musepaper," the organization monthly ... and membership is available by calling (213) 654-1665 or writing LASS, P.O. Box 93759, LA, CA 90093.

Finally, Los Angeles Women in Music (LAWIM) is another great networking organization for both men and women-experts and novices alike involved in music but interested in its contributions to society as well as to arts and entertainment. Serving as the music industry's collective conscience, LAWIM is primarily responsible for fund raising events and charitable auctions; they also offer job listing in the music industry. For additional information regarding membership and upcoming projects, contact (213) 969-2537.

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## SONIC GOSPEL

Hi. It's that time of the month again.

This month, you may get to see a sporadic rebuttal by the infamous Bruce "The [Dead To Us] Diva for the 90's" Marshall. If the subject seems to evaporate and the spelling and grammar suddenly go awry, you're there. You've been warned. Steve "Mr. Undulation" Moller and I, Bill "Involuntary" Smith have been watching our backs (lovely view) for a month or so already.

*Involuntary. Mr. Undulation! Let it be known to all that in fact I am no longer the diva for the nineties! (Oh no, you say!!!) Well it's true. Due to popular demand and by vote of a totally unpartisan committee, I have been officially ordained the one and only "King Latifa," ruler of anything the "queen" ain't! .*

Rebuttal to follow ...

Hmm. See what I mean?

In as much as we have covered all the basics of studio preparation, the time has come to begin the actual task of recording. There is a thing called studio etiquette.

Some of these things we have addressed before, but making an imbecile of yourself is something to be avoided at all costs. So ...

First and foremost. Be professional. This includes, but is not limited to, the following. Show up on time. (On time in this business is actually a few minutes early, so as to begin working on time.) Show up sober. Show up prepared.

Generally the drummer will need to get there first; a large kit takes time to set up. The engineer is going to need to work with your kit.

There are a lot of variables. He knows the room and his equipment. You are probably used to playing live where all you hear is the sound of the kit acoustically, maybe with some monitor support. This has little to do with getting the sound in the studio.

There are two ways to approach this. 1. Work with the engineer. 2. Work against the engineer. We'll assume that item 1 is your choice.

Let him know what kind of sound you like - reference it with some artists whose drum sounds you like. Do this in advance if you can; you'll begin working together with the same goal in mind. He will probably want to tune your drums. Hopefully, you'll have brand new, never before tuned heads on your drums (both top and bottom if it's a double headed kit). Let the engineer do his work. Help but don't be a pest. What you hear while he is working may have little to do with the final result.

Guitarist rigs generally set up a little more quickly than the drums, and the degree of communication between engineer and player needs to be very high. One of the critical things to be mutually understood is the number of different parts within a song and the role of each. Spend the most time worrying over the main parts of the song, unless you have an unlimited budget (like a rich girlfriend or parents).

Get your gear to sound the way you like it and then work with the engineer in getting that sound to tape. Be aware that any effects you record are there forever. Generally, it's a lot

## GEEKS IN TRIPPLICATE

easier to add delays, reverbs, and what not in the mix. That way, we can experiment without being committed to any one sound or effect until the final mix. The effects gear in the studio is probably sonically superior to the stomp boxes you own as well. This is one of the broadest areas of creativity - keep an open mind!

Keyboard players - don't wait until the session begins to start putting patches together. This wastes time and often turns into a free for all of opinions as to what works and what doesn't. (Great opportunity for arguments and ego battles.) If you're using any sequences or samples, have them ready ahead of time.

While the engineer is getting sounds together, keep your mouths shut. What he is working on and doing may be leading directly toward what you wanted in the first place, but all you'll do is slow the process down. He'll ask for your opinion when he has completed all the necessary preparations. Remember that the producer reigns over this area as well.

You play your instrument. You're a musician. That's your job. The engineer is supposed to get the sounds recorded to the tape as the producer directs him - that's his job. Let them work. Constant interruptions waste everyone's time and money.

Ever seen *Spinal Tap*? Ever notice how the opinion of someone who isn't in the band is generally a source of irritation to everyone except the band member who brought them? Keep anyone you don't need out of the studio.

Friends, significant others, crew people, everybody wants to come along. It's cool to hang out in the studio. They may mean well but they're probably entirely useless. They have no real purpose other than to interrupt the creative flow.

Most musicians are used to playing live. Most of your pals are used to hearing and seeing

you live. The studio is not a live show. They are two totally different forums. This tends to place a definite qualifier on anyone's opinion. This is why a producer will attend a few rehearsals and go see your show a couple of times. It is his job to translate what makes your band into a saleable recording. Let him do his job. (Notice how this phrase gets repeated?)

Don't ask how things work or what they do during the session. This really slows things down. Ask later - at lunch or after the session. Don't ask things like who is getting the hotel rooms? Where are the keys? Did you remember to pick up your wallet at the massage parlor? These kind of questions tend to throw an individual's concentration off. Not a good idea. Don't eat all the food or drink everything while everyone else is busy.

Don't show up drunk or stoned. What seems like a great idea when you're trashed may not be such a hot idea in the morning. Remember that *Wake up next to Godzilla* routine? It applies here too. Get wasted when you're finished. Make the producer pay for it.

Leave your ego at home. This is work upon which your career depends. What counts is the final product, not whether it makes you look cool or not, or if your part is up front in the mix or not. If it sells 200 billion copies, you obviously did it right, and everyone will think you're godlike anyway.

The studio is a weird place. You get all wired up. You listen in headphones instead of your normal fifty 4X12 cabinets. It is difficult to play to a plate of glass instead of a throng of screaming potential sex partners. You need not be as relaxed and casual as possible. Your ego and/or a lot of people milling about can distract you, make you tense, give you a woody, or give you social diseases. These may or may not be your idea of fun.

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## TAMPA/WEST FLA. BY DJ JUSTICE

LIVING COLOUR hit the Special Events Center in Tampa for an easily sold-out show with KING'S X in March. During their visit here, Living Colour tore it up, plain and simple. Out of the gate with "Type," Vernon Reid and Co. wailed through the majority of *Vivid* and *Time's Up*. The chaos was heavy in the front, with a pit going full on throughout. *The Most Active Pit Dweller Award* would have to go out to Ravi Jakhota, drummer for Tampa's own CRIMSON GLORY, who was seen flying in and onto various parts of the crowd. The BLEEDING HEARTS are real close to signing a development deal with a major label. This band stands as Florida's most likely act for a possible signing. Local thrash upstarts ROADKILL may have secured an on-the-road excursion with Roadrunner's EXHORDER that would take them through Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. Either way, this young, aggressive unit has made some impact here that deserves valid credit and a break. The rumors continue to circulate about the possible demise of the Bay's ROXX GANG. Despite claims from the band's management to the contrary, word has it that if the group hasn't already split, it is definitely forthcoming. JULLIET vocalist Kenny McGee can officially be tagged now as the former vocalist of that Florida band. Julliet were with Enigma during its last months. McGee is presently rehearsing with longtime local contenders HEARTLESS who specifically let go of their founding vocalist Jimi Robinette in time for McGee's arrival. About the transition, McGee had this to say: "It was time for me to move on. They were looking to make a change and so was I." The band is rehearsing non-stop for a hometown show here in April and will be heading out west soon after. One of the most impressive shows to hit this town recently was SAIGON KICK on the 18th of April at the Rock-It. Describe the show? Honestly it's one of those you'd have to be there. The

band is currently doing a press run through Europe that including an appearance on their version of MTV, numerous 'zine interviews and an enviable shmooze fest at a DAVID LEE ROTH show in Amsterdam. Remember, this band is from Florida, one of the best unknown musical hotbeds in the country.

## ORLANDO/CENTRAL FLA. BY MATT KELEMAN

MOJO NIXON brought his unique brand of weirdness to Club Spacefish recently, and graced the airwaves of WUCF with a live broadcast before the show. During the radio set, Mojo improvised a song on the spot and dedicated it to the listeners. "There's Nothin' Going On In Orlando" probably won't be a staple of his live act, but it was damn funny.

Earache/Combat death metallists MASSACRE have completed work on an album slated for release in May. The 10 tracks were recorded at MORRISOUND STUDIO, produced in part by COLIN RICHARDSON. The band, featuring Rick Rozz on guitar and Kam Lee on vocals, has reformed its original lineup. Bill Andrews and Terry Butler had been the rhythm section for DEATH on the *Leprosy* and *Spiritual Healing* albums, but have now returned in a big way. The band will follow the release with a European tour starting in the second week of June. They will play locally before the tour, so expect an album release party soon. Jacksonville's PRODIGY have recently relocated to Orlando and threw a demo release party on March 25. AZREAL, who are shooting a video for "They Live" opened the show. AGONY COLUMN and DEICIDE will play the Beacham Theater on April 13th. The Beacham will also host PIGFACE (featuring members of REVOLTING COCKS and KILLING JOKE) and SILVERFISH on the 20th and KREATOR May 4th. Look for a ska party on April 16th featuring the TOASTERS.

ALTER EGO is recording this month and expect to have a

new album soon. The band has radically changed its sound, taking a more aggressive approach and adding 16 songs since October. SLOW and BRAILLE CLOSET have tours in the works, the latter playing shows with the BEGGARWEEDS, who have finished work on their Michael Stipe produced album. WUCF will be hosting a fund drive on April 19th through the 28th. The station will feature local bands playing in the studio and is organizing a concert at the Beach Club. Rumor has it that if the station raises enough cash they will be able to vastly expand their programming. If the afternoon show is any indication, the money will be well spent. I wish I could personally thank NEIL YOUNG AND CRAZY HORSE for playing an awesome show at the Orlando Arena. If you weren't there you really missed out.

## JACKSONVILLE/NORTH FLA. BY LESLIE R. MARINI

This month's get on your feet and take action event: LIVING COLOUR at the Florida Theater in Jacksonville with KING'S X. The current tour is sponsored by GREENPEACE and Florida leads the way in donations. A good sign for the future — another positive improvement: Live music making a good comeback at the Milk Bar. This month Ed and Larry brought us CORROSION OF CONFORMITY, 24-7 SPYZ, SECOND STEP, MATERIAL ISSUE, BOOK OF LOVE, and look for DEAD MILKMEN sometime in April. Also appearing on the alternative scene is PYLON, MOJO NIXON, THE JODYGRIND, and look for FIREHOSE and DAVID LOWERY all at Einstein. STRANGER is selling out in Tallahassee with local faves TRASH PALACE on the opening slot. REDRUM PRODUCTIONS are getting ready to celebrate their first year anniversary with CHILD'S PLAY, NUISANCE, SILENT SCREAM, SCHURLOCKE and SHOTGUN WEDDING in what should be the social event of the year. Back in Jacksonville, I can't tell 'em



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# MUSIC REPORT

apart dept: **BLACK CAT** suffered from minor technical difficulties but made up for it with a cool sound. **BIG ENGINE** is also set to gig the Florida Theater and 11-year old slide guitar whiz **DEREK TRUCKS** gets the video treatment from **ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT**. **DAVE MASON** drew a nice turnout at Pappa's, and local band night is still going strong. **PRODIGY** have made the move to Orlando and attracted the interest of more than a few record labels. They'll be returning to Jacksonville in April for an all ages show at Cedar Hills Armory with **TAJAH** and **SHEKINAH**. **EDDIE SELPH** has left the **REGULATORS** and reformed **CIRCUS** with **VERNON BAHL** - we'll be looking for a return gig soon, and you can still catch the **Regulators** at the beaches - and you can catch me wherever you catch your copy of **THRUST** - Welcome home to the troops.

## ATLANTA/GEORGIA BY DOUGLAS HOOD

Sky Records, home to **FLAT DUO JETS**, **PYLON** and **LAVA LOVE**, have recently signed local favorites **INSANE JANE**. The band features Tom Branch (guitar/backing vocals), Chris (yellow) Callas (vocals), Tim Campion (drums), and Dave Roth (bass). They will head into the studio to work on additional material to be added to last year's *A Green Little Pill*, their cassette release recorded at **JOHN KEANE'S STUDIO** in Athens. It appears that **SWELL**, formerly named **HOMEMADE SISTER**, will be forced to change their name again. A San Francisco unit had the moniker first. On a more positive note, the band has been working on material for several tribute albums. These will include "Pleasant Valley Sunday" by **THE MONKEES**, "Thirteen" by **BIG STAR**, and "Ear," which is a poem by Ernest Noyles Brookings. All tracks were laid down at **FURIES STUDIO** by ace producer **ED BURDELL**. **THE TOMBSTONES**, having just signed with Relativity, have decided to re-record their entire album. This time out though,

Rick Richards (GA. SATELLITES) will be behind the boards in **TRICLOPS STUDIO**. On a more reverent note, the band recently paid a visit to Greenwood, Mississippi, to honor blues great Robert Johnson. They purchased a headstone to place on his unmarked grave with the inscription, "Resting in the Blues." Jonny Shines — longtime friend of Johnson's — sang "Crossroads" at the eulogy. Ichiban Records has launched a new series entitled *Wild Dog...* This will encompass a traditional and blues/rock style. The ultimate goal is label recognition such as that which is currently held by Chicago's **ALLIGATOR** and New Orleans' **BLACK TOP**. Releases include *U.B. da JUDGE* by the **LEGENDARY BLUES BAND**, *Disciple of the Blues* by Sonny Rhodes, *Let's Swamp Awhile* by Smokehouse, and *Good Rockin' Daddy* by Big Joe Maher. **DA DA ID** has been putting the finishing touches on a video set for "Happy Song from Mark," "Boxes" and "Against the Fence." All work was done at **BLUE WALL STUDIOS** with producer **BRIAN KING**. **REVERSING HOUR** has also been at Blue Wall, finishing up a new single including "Plasticland," b/w "Mr. Krakowski's Blue Period."

is putting out the second CD featuring local groups. The Unsigned 2 project is due to be released at the beginning of the month of April. The 14 bands who contributed one song each are **THE ITCH**, **FARRCRY**, **VDNAL**, **ACES WILD**, **CANAVERAL**, **AMBER ROSE**, **COLD TURKEY**, **CRYSTAL HEART**, **MOTOR**, **NO REASON**, **NAKED RYTHM**, **RANDOM PLAY**, **SHANGHI MUTT**, and **SWEATIN' BULLETS**. **CITY LIMITS** is joining the ranks of the rock & rollers again, this time with the rededication of the Metro as the Metro Rock. Wednesday and Thursday nights are now being dedicated to original music, a few of the bands lined up for April are: **WALL II WALL**, **VIOLENT PLAYGROUND**, **MADD MARGRITT**, **RAZOR RED**, **UNCLE FESTER**, **STILETTO**, **LITTLE SISTER** and **ELYSIUM**. The idea here is to be South Florida's answer to the Cat Club in New York. The **PLUS FIVE** in Davie and the **PLUS TWO** in West Palm Beach are entering the final stages of the **FLORIDA ROCK WARS '91**. The semi-finals will continue the first two Mondays in April and the finals that will determine which band will represent the respective club they are playing in will be held April 15th. The winners will then go on to compete against each other in the statewide finals. Our very own country band the **MAVERICKS** are about to run the third pressing of their self-titled, self-released CD. In addition to local distribution, the May's just got distribution in Germany and Holland, as well as reviews in **Billboard Hits**, and England's **Melody Maker**. See them live April 19th at the **CACTUS CANTINA**. **THE BUTTON SOUTH** and **DRUM DESIGN** are hosting **GUITAR WARS '91** at the **Button South** April 29th. 25 finalists will each have 3 minutes to show their stuff to a panel of judges made up of pro players, teachers, etc. The grand prize is an \$1800.00 custom George Lynch model ESP guitar autographed by his royal Lynchness after his recent performance. In addition to the Axe will be assorted amplifiers, strings, and guitar paraphernalia, and lastly a "Spotlight" in **Guitar for the Practicing Musician**, who is also lending support. Entries will be accepted after April 1st. That's all from the burning churning way south end of the state.

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RIPPING THE BAY TO SHREDS!!!!

# Reggae Vibrations

There is a wave approaching, and it's been coming for quite awhile. No one can exactly explain its revival, or where it began. Some suggest that it is primarily curiosity, or perhaps a fad. Others believe people are craving something "different." Whatever the reason, the fact is obvious — it is here. What is this it I am referring to? Well in just one word: REGGAE!

Reggae is the foundation and aspiration of this column — *Reggae Vibrations*. It is our sincere hope that *Reggae Vibrations* may serve to introduce for some of you, and further inform for others, the happenings in the arena of Reggae. In upcoming articles my staff and I will share with you the array of talent of regional Reggae bands such as Tampa Bay's UPRIISING, JOHUKAMES and RAPPORT BLAZE and, Orlando's EMPHIS and CARRIBEAN EXPLOSION. Continue to read this column to share interviews from these and other various Reggae bands. We will also interview world renowned artists and let you know the latest happenings in nightclubs in the Florida and Georgia area. Not only that, but for you food connoisseurs out there, articles of interest regarding restaurants and recipes to excite your palate will be included and much more!

But for now let's take this one step at a time. Some of you may be asking, "What is Reggae?" In a recent interview with Elektra recording sensation STEEL PULSE, LEAD VOCALIST DAVID HIND defines Reggae as "lyrical music with militant messages, [regarding] political and social issues that are expressed by the sufferer ... The tempo of Reggae came from

African and Latin American beats mixed with American music heard in the 1960's over radio stations such as those in New Orleans."

However, recent bands have further expounded, or deviated the definition of Reggae. Case in point, Arista recording artists THE SAMPLES who gave an massive performance recently in St. Petersburg. The Samples took time from their hectic schedule of promoting their new album *The Samples* to discuss the topic of Reggae. As Charles Hambleton, vocalist/guitarist for the group explained, the group's primary influence was Reggae legend Bob Marley. The Samples have uniquely combined a mix of folk and rock 'n roll with a backdrop of methodical reggae rhythm. According to Hambleton, the group is able to combine a sound of Reggae with Crosby, Stills, and Nash. "For many," Hambleton continued, "Reggae is almost spiritual, but for us it was a matter of combining our background with Reggae."

The intensity of Reggae is continuing to rise to new fronts, both nationally and internationally. For example, artists who were once defined solely as "rock & roll," "R&B," or perhaps even "folk" have often a Reggae flavor in many of their recordings. Singers such as recording artist STING and LIONEL RICHIE have found much success and a strong following with their "new" sound.

As I said, this is just an introduction. Please continue to read *Reggae Vibrations* in the upcoming editions of *Thrust* to be kept up to date with all the latest happenings with Reggae.

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## HARMONY AS A WAY OF LIFE

BY MARVELOUS MARVIN BOONE

*The O'Jays had their first big hit in 1972 and went on to record five gold records, "Backstabbers," "Love Train," "For The Love Of Money," "I Love Music," and "Used To Be My Girl." The group had been together for over a decade before they even had a hit record. Most groups don't even stay together that long, even with early success.*

*Imagine plugging away for thirteen years without a big hit. That's how the O'Jays, schoolmates in Canton, Ohio started out. And after all the millions of records, that's exactly where the O'Jays are again: thirteen years since their last million seller.*

*The O'Jays have never given up. Even after original member William Powell died of cancer in 1977, the group keeps on harmonizing and soul stirrin' after all these years. Eddie Levert, co-founder of the O'Jays, and the gospel intense lead singer, talked to me about where the O'Jays have been, and where they are going.*

*Eddie is a seasoned pro with an eye to the future. You can't help but feel his enthusiasm that the O'Jays have more hits in them.*

*With all the fake soul around these days, Michael Bolton, Simply Red, and Rick Astley (sings like a bird — looks like a nerd), maybe the world is ready for the real thing.*



**THRUST:** You started out back in the 50's. Right, Eddie? Singing doo-wop music?

**EDDIE LEVERT:** Yes, corner. We were one of the original corner groups, ya know, standin' around lovin' the Drifters, James Brown, and listening to that kind of music while we were in Canton, Ohio. We listened to WHOL and they played a variety of music. That's where we got most of our background, standin' on street corners listening to that kind of stuff and watching Dick Clark's concert tours coming.

And you guys were called The Mascots ... Man, don't bring that up.

So, you didn't like The Mascots? Should be dogs or something ...

We started off being called The Triumphs and everybody thought The Triumphs were called The Tramps. So we changed it with Sid Nathan down at King Records.

**Down in Cincinnati, Ohio?**

Right! Right! — which was the first label we were ever officially on — the first big label. He thought Mascots was a better name than Triumph. We thought that sucked too, but we wanted to be in the record biz and as long as we were on the records, call us anything!

You've been putting out records and making music for over 30 years, 5 million selling singles ... unbelievable. And you were around for 10 years before big success?

We did the "chillin'" circuits for at least 10 to 15 years, and that helped us in the later years to become better performers. It helped us to de-

liver a good stage show, which is why we are still here. We went to the school of power theaters, uptown theaters, marqueses ...

Plus you were rising nice and slow, not like a meteoric deal where you had nothing left. No, at least what it did for us, with the hard knocks, hitting and missing was, I think, that it has a way of forging a true entertainer. I think that it has a way of getting the knowledge, heart, and compassion that you need to be a true performer.

And like you say, you're still around! Yeah (laughing), and that's the whole key, to still be around and still be in the mainstream. It's been about ten years since you did the song "Used To Be My Girl." People just love that record.

That was our last major record. Everything on record since then, between 1979 and 1987, was a real dry spell for the O'Jays.

That's when William Powell died of cancer. Yes, around '77, and then we went through a transition. We got Sammy Strain in the group. Then Gamblin' Huff started having a transitional problem because they were the guys producing the monster hits like "Backstabber" and "Love Train." They started having problems, and consequently, when the writers' pens start to dry up, the artists also have a moment when they can't get off the mark.

**It happened to Motown.**  
It was time for the O'Jays to get a better hand on their career ... so in 1987 we started writing a little more and doing more production of our stuff. Then in 1990, along comes Ron Fair of TMI Records, who was a blessing in disguise, and he brought with him a song by Bob Dylan called "Emotionally Yours" and a song called "Something For Nothing." With his inspiration and belief in the group, we've been able to come up with a record that I think will compete with "Used To Be My Girl."

If you compare the time span from when you started to the time when you had your first big success, it's equivalent to the time span from your last success to now.

Absolutely. If you're able to hang in there, your time will eventually come around again. You have to keep your head on right and know what you're about.

Have you ever heard the Bulletboys do the song "For the Love of Money"? What do you think about that?

I loved it! I thought it was great! In the movie "New Jack City," Troop and Levert and my son's group do a version of "For the Love of Money." It makes me feel like it was all worthwhile, even if I don't have the 20-30 million.

It could be that this is your time again. Could be! That's what artists pray for, a chance to express themselves when everyone is willing to listen. You're never too old and it's never too late and all you have to do is stay true.

I think everything is moving in the right direction. No matter what happens, Eddie, you have lived a dream.

I couldn't put it any better! We started when I was like 16. We had chart records "Lonely Drifter," "Lipstick Tracks," and a few others, but it didn't become a dream until "Backstabbers." Then the dream came true. I got more out of this life and this business than I ever dreamed.

# FLORIDA DEATH METAL COMES ALIVE!

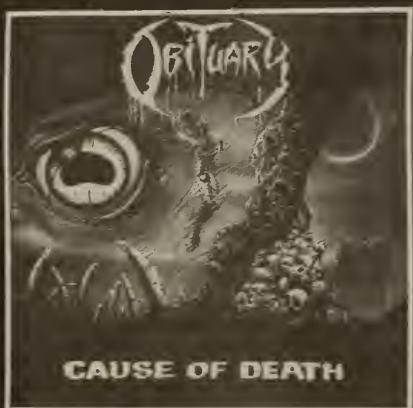
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# CHILD'S PLAY

Child's Play, Baltimore's hottest new rock & roll claim to fame, were thrust into the public eye late last year, as sort of a breath of fresh air blasting out of the musical mayhem. Their unique blend of blues and metal have opened the doors and catapulted them onto the concert scene. With six months of touring under their belts, their schedule keeps intensifying with no relief in sight. They finally found a few brief moments of peace in a St. Louis hotel room, where we were fortunate enough to get a call from John Allen, drummer and spokesperson for the band.

**Thrust:** John, so tell me a little bit about what's happened with the tour so far.

**John Allen:** Well, we've been playing nonstop. We were out with the label's tour support before Christmas for eight weeks on the tour bus, doing the "cool guy" thing, and then we went back home to Baltimore, but we didn't stop playing. Every weekend we'd go out regionally and play.

**What kind of reception have you been getting, now, as compared with when you first began the tour?**

A pretty good one. Some of the places we've played at for the second time have been drawing a bigger crowd, and some of the places we've been hitting for the first time ever have been drawing huge crowds.

**And are you getting as much support from radio as you are from the crowds?**

Yeah. We've had huge success in our regional market in Baltimore and D.C. and areas in the

mid-Atlantic. We're like top ten on all the stations. We're just trying to carry that over to the other parts of the country.

**You were just here in November and you got a great reception from this area.**

Yeah, it was great! The next show we did was Orlando and I broke my hand! I had to play the rest of the tour with a fractured fifth metacarpal (that's your pinky bone in layman's terms). I had to do it! We couldn't just cancel the tour, it was our first tour out! I had to wear a split cast and I had it wrapped with a bandage, but I just took it off every night before I played.

**So are you fully functional again?**

Yeah (he laughs), it's pretty much back to normal, except when one of those big manly dudes grabs my hand to shake it.

**So are you planning to continue pushing the album after this part of the tour with a new single release?**

Actually, the label's talking about sending us to the studio to record the second album.

**Sounds like you've been working nonstop the whole tour.**

We sure have. I've been doing all the press for the band, and we've all been going to the record stores and radio stations every day, talking to the store managers and begging them to order more of our records, inviting them out to shows, calling radio stations, doing interviews and trying to get as much support as we possibly can. We've been working our asses off.

**by Karat**

# FUNHOUSE

"It's great, but..." That's the line Funhouse heard over and over from uptight A&R folk who loved their demos, but were afraid to take a chance. It boils down to the fact that the quintet isn't easily classifiable; they're a band ahead of their time both visually and musically. Funhouse had been playing their manic hybrid of unpredictable metal/heavy pop/funk-thrash since late '86, opening for bands such as Guns N' Roses and Danzig. Now it looks like the time is right. With their Caroline Records debut *Generation Generator*, the world will finally be privy to one of Hollywood's best-kept secrets.

Since their formation, The LA-based lunatics Chris Hazard (vocals), Marc Vachon (guitar), Joe E. (guitar), Cat (bass) and Jon Hill (drummer) have stayed true to themselves. "We've always been the same musically. We never jumped on what everyone else was doing," explains Marc. They've seen friends like Marc's Fairfax high school buddy Traci Guns go on to success, but now it's Funhouse's day in the sun. Like their clothes — a somehow fashionable mish-mash of skate/surf meets Haysi Fantasie in the gutter — Funhouse's music is eclectic and definitely not off the rack. Yet it's easy to imagine their sound and image reaching a wide audience of kids who are ready for the next thing which is fine with Funhouse. Mainstream is not a dirty word in the surprisingly large vocabulary of these Southern California dudes.

"We all have different influences, like old KISS, Suicidal Tendencies, Deep Purple, even the Little River Band. Each guy is really left-field," laughs Marc. "Chris even likes Michael Bolton's voice. We're the ultimate freak line-

up," he continues, "but we always had the songs. We're metal, but we're way more punk, rock/alterative than that too."

Tempering their often commercially-influenced song structure and perceptive lyrics is Funhouse's legendary live show and image. "These guys allowed me to be a freak on stage," Chris proudly says of his bandmates. Freak? Well, you might not want to bring the Funhouse boys home to mother, though under the grunge and barely restrained energy lurk some pretty sane dudes. If you asked anyone in Hollywood, however, you might hear different. For example, there's the time the band got some unwanted exposure — it seems Chris' leather pants split as he did a spread eagle of an amp during their opening slot for L.A. Guns. Then there's the night Chris was propositioned by a frosted-lipstick porno actress. At least he got a song out of that one — check out the aptly titled "Christine in Chains." Other Funhouse faves include their theme tune and first single, "One Funhouse," "Rock N' Roses," (inspired by a line in "Charlie's Angels"), "Preacher," and the title track, "Generation Generator."

"We look like one of those speed metal bands but we're not as ugly," explains Chris. Funhouse's goals are as clear cut as their image. "We want to cross over to everybody, to play the slimy underground clubs, then play for 15-year-old Valley girls at the Forum." Funhouse has moshed and sweated their way through the school of hard knocks. Now it's time for these street dogs to become the nastiest pinups to ever invade the bedrooms of teenage girls.

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## SOME NEWS AND SOME VIEWS ABOUT SOME BLUES

Now that the war is over and everybody is waving flags and laughing, is it still o.k. to have the blues? Was it even a real war? It seemed more like a mini-series, like *Winds of War* or *Roots*. The Persian Gulf War came complete with music and stars, like Peter Arnett of CNN. In this war, T.V. reporters, not soldiers, were the stars. John Wayne could not have starred in the Gulf War because he couldn't type, and of course, because he's dead. Each television network had its own title and graphics for the war as if it were a T.V. movie; "The Desert War," "War in the Gulf," "Towelheads in Turmoil," and so on.

Instead of the Big War, the Gulf War will be called the Mini-War or Mini-Series War. Whatever it was, it's over, and television sucks again. The bills keep coming and the jobs keep going. The car still breaks down and the everyday battles of life are still with us. The war may be over but the fight goes on, just like the Blues. In fact, the story of the struggle of life *IS* the Blues. The Blues have no color, shape, smell, or taste. Luckily, we can hear the Blues; how else could we find them?

Soon people will be taking down their flags like they would take down Christmas decorations and the post-holiday blues will settle in.

Yes, it's safe to have the blues once again and here's a handy dandy guide to some blues to have in your collection.

**ROBERT JOHNSON: The Complete Recordings** (Columbia) — This is where the modern Blues started and you should start here, too. All forty-one songs this seminal Bluesman recorded are here on a two compact disc set, that comes in a nifty box (that I use to prop open a window in my music room.) Use your box any way you want to (sounds like the title to an old Blues song), but the music stands on its own. Robert Johnson is the most intense, riveting bluesman of all time. He must be heard to be believed, and even then you might not quite believe it.

**TAMPA RED: The Guitar Wizard** (RCA) — As his name intones, TR grew up in Tampa and wrote many classic blues songs such as, "It Hurts Me Too" and "Sweet Little Angel" (a big hit for B.B. King in the fifties). Tampa Red and his partner, Big Maceo, set the blueprint for what was later called Chicago Blues.

**SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON: King Biscuit Time** (Arholt Discs) — There are two Sonny Boy Williamsons! The first one, John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson, was not the nicest of guys. In fact, he was beat and kicked to death after a gig

by some dudes he somehow upset. This disc, however, is by the second Sonny Boy. Both Sonnys played the Blues harp like nobody's business, but the second Sonny put the Blues harp in the front of the band for a raw, hard driving sound. This disc features Sonny Boy II in the early fifties, his first recordings. Great stuff.

**JOHN LEE HOOKER: The Detroit Years** (DCC Discs) — The boogie was born in the early fifties from John Lee and these recordings let you in on the excitement. Bonnie Raitt may have made him a star, but he made Bonnie want to sing. There would be no ZZ Top if it weren't for the boogies on this disc.

**The war may be over but the fight goes on, just like the Blues. In fact, the story of the struggle of life *IS* the Blues. The Blues have no color, shape, smell, or taste. Luckily, we can hear the Blues or how else could we find them?**

**HOWLIN' WOLF: Change My Way** (Hess) — The scariest, baddest blues singer of all time. The first time my cat heard Howlin' Wolf, she hid under the sofa for an hour! She has never been the same since, and neither has anyone who has heard the Wolf. Listen to the Wolf loud, but with all the lights on.

**MUDDY WATERS: Trouble No More** (Chess) — Mr. Muddy Waters is in his prime in this collection of original singles. Some of this stuff has been out of print for years. This is great Muddy Waters, featuring Little Walter, Otis Spann, Willie Dixon, and some of the best Blues

Muddy ever had. "Got My Mojo Working" in its original studio recording, featured here, is worth the price of the admission.

**B.B. KING: Live at the Regal** (MCA) — This is the disc that helped B.B. become the King of the Blues. He has another live disc, "Live at Cook County Jail," which is just as good. Get both discs by B.B. and you've got B.B. live in your home for two hours and you don't have to feed him. B.B. has recorded with U-2 and Randy Travis. Who else can claim that?

**BUDDY GUY: I Was Walking Through the Woods** (Chess) — Buddy Guy recorded this disc 25 years ago and seldom has he sounded more impassioned than this. The dramatic "The First Time I Met The Blues" will knock you out of your seat, even if you are standing! This is hair raising stuff!

**OTIS SPANN: Otis Spann is the Blues** (Candid-French Import) — This is simply the great Otis Spann, formerly with Muddy Waters, on piano, and Robert Jr. Lockwood (stepson of Robert Johnson) on guitar. No other instruments at all! This is Blues piano at its finest.

**AMERICAN FOLK BLUES FESTIVAL:** Various Artists (Optimum, Inc.) — This is a series of discs spanning 1962-1972, and what a sampling of Blues it is! John Lee Hooker, T-Bone Walker, Willie Dixon, Big Joe Williams, Lightnin' Hopkins, Big Mama Thornton, Otis Rush, and scads more live and in the studio. Highly recommended.

All of this stuff is easy to find on compact disc and pretty hard to find on record.

Turntables are still fun however. Put a can of cat food on it and watch your cat go nuts, especially at 78 RPM.

The war is over. Have some Blues, won't you?

*Marvelous Marvin Boone often reminds us that the blues did not start with the Smurfs. Between medication, he can be heard mid-day on Mix 96 in Tampa, Florida.*

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# TEST SPINS

## REM *Out of Time* (Warner)

After the commercial success of their last album, *Green*, and songs like "Stand (In the Place Where You Live)" and "Pop Song '89," it's not surprising that REM wouldn't want to veer away from the mainstream. Their latest effort, *Out of Time* successfully appeases their desire. Michael Stipe's insightful lyrics cause the listener to stop and think, as opposed to simply moving on to the next mindless verse as commonly found in the music of the day. Stipe's vocals, paired with guitarist Peter Buck's catchy riffs and Bill Berry's drumming have an addicting effect, punctuated by Mike Mills' bass guitar and back-up vocals by Kate Pierson of the B-52's. *Out of Time* should prove to be a favorite among old and new REM fans alike. *Maria Moraca*

## Firehouse *Firehouse* (Epic)

North Carolina's Firehouse were originally named White Heat until a Canadian band with rights to the name forced them to change it. Before the band changed its name, their demo tape was produced by Vinnie Vincent/Slaughter bassist Dana Strum. This connection probably didn't hurt their efforts to acquire a recording contract.

Strangely enough, the bands' sound falls somewhere in between Bon Jovi and Slaughter. The musicianship of Firehouse can't be faulted but in the songwriting department they fall short. Songs like "Lover's Lane" an the obligatory power ballad "Love of a Lifetime" are filled with cliche. On the other hand, "All She Wrote" and "Shake and Tumble" are enjoyable hook laden rockers. This album shows a potential for Firehouse to grow into a serious arena rock band. If you enjoy the "hard-pop" sound, take a chance on Firehouse. *Steve Turner*

## I, Napoleon *I Napoleon* (Geffen)

Between Canadian bred Steve Napoleon's signing with Geffen and the release of this record, something like two years have elapsed. That kind of thing is enough to make anyone pissed off. Steve Napoleon is very pissed.

It may take your ears a few spins to get adjusted to this record because of Napoleon's vocals. While the music itself is very clean, well produced rock, Steve Napoleon's vocals are disturbingly tortured. Most songs revolve around tales of love lost, longing, and sadness. Not wholly original topics, I'll admit, but the way he expresses the sentiment in such a desperate way, is truly unique.

"Perfect Absolution" and "Go To Pieces" are two of the strongest tracks with both having hit single possibilities, but my favorite would have to be the tormented "My Backyard." Few bands these days play rock & roll with any degree of passion. I, Napoleon is one of them. *Jim Filial*

## Kacy Ross *1961* (Downtown)

The long awaited solo album from Tampa Bay's own Kacy Ross of Deloris Telescope fame is finally out and is appropriately titled *Kacy Ross 1961*. Man does it delve into the types and styles of all the good sounding stuff that those of us born around that year will certainly remember. The release spotlights the intense "Mother of all Lions" to the quaint but humorous "Sandy Doesn't Care" to the spontaneously funky rhythm of "Tempo 34." Produced and recorded by Kacy and Steve Repetti at the Time Machine in Clearwater, and released on Downtown Records, is surely the kind of tape that addicts you to listen over and over to discover newsounds that you might have missed the first time around. At the same time the lyrical content is sure to give you a few laughs. *Chip Mignacca*

## Deep Purple *Slaves and Masters* (RCA)

Through a multitude of breakups and regroupings and numerous personnel changes, Deep Purple have always maintained their status as forefathers of the heavy metal movement.

Now back with the original lineup and new vocalist Joe Lynn Turner, they bring us their latest effort.

First off, the album sounds a bit more commercial than most of us are used to hearing from Deep Purple, but it doesn't take long to realize that they have not lost their touch.

Hot tracks include "Fire in the Basement," "Wicked Ways," and "Too Much is Not Enough," also not lacking in a couple of trademark Deep Purple anthems that display Jon Lord's elaborate string and keyboard arrangements are "Love Conquers All" and "Fortuneteller."

Deep Purple have always exuded this atmosphere of lament, power and glory that identify them as one of the premiere metal bands of all time. And now with their current line-up, this makes their resurgence into the metal realm stronger still, a blistering comeback for certain.



## THE GREAT AMERICAN STIFF

Well, buckos, it looks like the war is over and as the illustrious leader of the free world put it "we kicked some ass." Well, I'd better not rag on Bush too much, because, after all, he does have a 95% approval rating, which is kind of funny since most of the people I know don't approve of him. But I guess in the "New World Order," people like us don't really mean that much anyway. But if you take the red, white and blue blinders off for a few minutes ... what was really accomplished? The liberation of Kuwait? Yeah ... right; Kuwait's gonna have western style government. If you think for one minute that Crown Prince Saad Abdullah Al-Sabah is going to let the people elect their own government your living in "la-la-land". This guy's a real piece of work; as soon as Iraq invaded, he hauled ass south and now he's hiring hit men to waste the Kuwaitis that stayed to defend their homeland. He's definitely Nobel Prize material. What about cheap oil, you probably ask? Well, since all the oil wells in Kuwait are burning I don't see how oil will be getting any cheaper. "Well, we stopped that crazy bastard Saddam Hussein," would more than likely be your next comment. Yes, we did stop him and the good ole US made a lot of interesting friends along the way. I, for one, sleep better at night knowing that Syria and Iran are now our friends and allies. Now it's time for a reality check — eventually Hussein's people will kill him, unless he can find some third world shithole that will grant him asylum. Then who will be in charge? You can bet your sweet ass that our new friends in Syria and Iran will have a major say in that, and who's to say that the new ruler of Iraq won't be a bigger asshole than Saddam. I don't know, buckos, but it seems that maybe if we had a real energy policy in this country — say an energy policy that wasn't tied to fossil fuels that pollute the environment and are non-reusable ... maybe an energy source like the sun or the wind? Consider the amount of money spent on Operation Desert Storm and just think if that amount would have been spent on something constructive like an energy policy that would make us less dependent on fossil fuels. But you know that will never happen in this country as long as Bush is in charge. He's made a lot of money from oil. So just resign yourself to the fact that every time our oil interests abroad are threatened, it's hup, two, three, four, off you go to Bush's oil war.

At this point I was gonna talk about Bob Martinez as the new Drug Czar (ha), but space is tight so I'll get on to music. Most of the bands I write about aren't on major labels; the majority of bands on major labels really don't do a lot for me. Although, there are some exceptions: **SOCIAL DISTORTION**, **JESUS & MARY CHAIN** AND **THE MINISTRY** come readily to mind. So, let's see what's going on in Indie land. First up from Cruz Records comes a new 7" split single featuring **BIG DRILL CAR** and **CHEMICAL PEOPLE**, each doing a coversong. Big Drill Car accelerate through Cheap Trick's "Surrender" with reckless abandon while Chemical People tackle Kiss's "Getaway" with an untamed fury. It's hard to believe that CP has only three members. All in all, a fine release and it comes on yellow vinyl. **COWBOY KILLERS** are a 5-piece band from the southern part of Wales, UK, and they have a cool 3-song 7" out. The A-side is entitled "KKK Wives on Holiday" and it's done in the style of early GBH and Discharge. The flip has 2-songs and it really kicks. Loud and fast is the order of the day. I bet these guys would be very intense live; it's on Sound Pollution Records: P.O. Box 6072, Florence, KY 41022. **RHYTHM COLLISION** are from Southern California and have a single out on Dr. Strange Records. This 2-song gem is great. The Doc's batting 2 for 2 with me. Strong vocals and a great production make this thing work. File it under extremely well done punk with strong pop sensibilities. It's \$3.50 postage paid from P.O. Box 7000-117, Altaloma, CA 91701. I hadn't heard any news about the UK **SUBS** lately and as I was thumbing through a *Flipside*, I saw an ad for a new Subs CD entitled *Killing Time*. So I immediately sent away for it; well it didn't disappoint. For those not familiar with the band here's a quick intro: they're from London and have been around for over a decade in one form or another. Vocalist Charlie Harper — who has to be in his mid- forties — has always been the frontman. On this CD he has assembled 3/4 of the original lineup. While *Killing Time* is more mellow than the band's earlier punk records it has its moments and proves that the Subs can rock out with the best of them. It's available from New Red Archives and here's the best part: when you place your first order they send you a free sampler album that features "Ultraman, Kraut," the way cool "Samian" and "Reagan Youth" among others. So what are you waiting for? Write for a catalog: 6520 Selman Avenue, Suite 1305, Hollywood, CA 90028. **CRASS** — the incredible English anarchist band of the late 70's and early 80's have not reformed, but they have released their back catalog on CD. So, Crass are my pick of the month. They didn't do things half-assed, they were committed to the cause of making the planet a better place to live and their music is a testament to that. Crass were not overly talented, but the conviction and the sincerity of their music more than makes up for that. Go to your local Indie record store and pick up *Christ The Album* on CD. It's a good starting point, it might get you to view things from a different perspective. Remember, there is more going on in the world than what the three networks tell you. **THE JESUS LIZARD** have a new album out entitled *Go At*, which I don't have. But I do have the 7" single "Mouth Breather" and if it's any indication of the album it's a buy or die. **Jesus Lizard** are fast becoming one of my favorite bands. When **BIG BLACK** and **RAPEMAN** went by the wayside, someone had to step in and fill the void, and the **Jesus Lizard** have done this just fine. As the singer of **THE DAMNED** once said: "Noise is for heroes, leave the music for zeros." Let's venture into fanzine land; it's a helluva lot more interesting than *Sports Illustrated* or *Newsweek*. **CHAIRS MISSING** is an excellent 'zine out of Connecticut. The last two issues I received were well done and featured interviews with **BABES IN TOYLAND**, **GALAXIE 500** and **BUFFALO TOM**, lots of record reviews that don't pull any punches, some cool editorial and a **SONIC YOUTH** tour diary. Send two bucks to Chairs Missing World Headquarters, P.O. Box 375, Fairfield, CT 06430-0375. You won't be disappointed. Till next month I'll leave you with this — you have your own mind, use it. Don't let other people form your opinions for you. PEACE.

# THE TAMPA BAY STREET REPORT

REPORTED BY THE MASSES

EDITED BY DJ JUSTICE

Since last month's column I've received a lot of feedback from musicians in the area who thought I was a bit harsh towards them. Last time around I gave a fair amount of criticism to those acts who, in my opinion, lacked the professionalism that it takes to make it to the big time. I'd have to say that I still stand by what I wrote 100%, but a lot of you countered my critique with some valid points concerning the conditions of the music scene here and what you are forced to deal with. I thought it would only be fair to these hard working individuals to take a closer look at how our music scene effects those at the center of all this chaos and controversy, the musicians themselves.

One aspect of our scene that is continuously being spoken of in dark corners is the severely biased politics in town. This involves everyone from bandmembers, radio people, the clubs, producers, the record stores, and even magazine editors. In this business there's no way around it, kind of like "Gilligan's Island" reruns.

"Who are these movers and shakers that control the music scene? Do you have to know

can be viewed as a good thing for those aspiring groups that might not otherwise get these highly coveted spots. On the other side, the bands doing this may ultimately be reducing the value of those acts that have established marketability. Why pay a great band \$800 for the night when a so-so act is willing to do it for nothing? A few of the club owners that I've spoken with have stated, though, that if a band is capable of drawing a crowd, they will ultimately get paid what they're worth. We'd like to believe that the cream of the music scene rises to the top and onto the stages of our local clubs.

How about the fans that are supposedly out there supporting these acts that are working their butts off? Some of you people are great. If you like a band, you go to the shows, you buy the tapes, you get into the music and you tell your friends about your favorite band. For those types of fans, the music scene is far better off because of your existence. Sounds great, huh? Well, wake up and smell the fog juice buddy. I don't know what club you've been going to lately but I see a lot to be desired. I

**"Many of us industry "professionals" from the area are so uptight that we can't combine efforts in the least to help the music scene. The truth is, the people that we're hurting through our petty indifferences are the ones that have provided us with these positions of power."** DJ Justice

the right people in town to get a fair shake? Is everyone out to get me?" These are all questions that a lot of my musician friends regularly present me with. Usually, I say that that no one is out to get them and to keep on with their struggling project. After they leave I say a little prayer knowing what they have to live with in the big cruel world of local politics.

One major aspect of our beloved scene is radio. Everybody loves radio. If radio likes your band your song can be played for the ears of tens of thousands of record buying club going listeners. Right? Possibly. With the onslaught of locally supportive programming (98's "Tampa Bay Rocks" and 95's "Radio Clash"), bands and their fans have been tuning in to see what is being heard. While many of the acts applaud local radio for the exposure, others claim favoritism and even (dare we say) payola as playing a role. Obviously the motivations behind these accusations and accolades vary, but the bottom line is, if radio likes you and plays your songs, the chances of your success will multiply considerably. This basic concept filters down from national acts hawking for their satellite's potential to a local band willing to buy their favorite jock a shot of tequila. It's all part of "the big picture." In the long run we'd like to believe that the bands getting airplay deserve it.

And then we have the night club scene in Tampa Bay. From some of the more capitalistic viewpoints, the bottom line is, these club owners are operating a business. More often than not, despite their love of the artform and desire to satisfy the customer, they're usually doing their damndest to stay out of the red. With plenty of acts wanting to play these clubs that are at an all-time, the opportunities available are generally limited to the chosen few. Due to the fierce competition, a lot of the bands playing out are doing so for little or no pay, primarily for the exposure. On one side of the coin, this

they do, though, and for the most part those are the bands that you see getting covered. Recently, in front of over 300 attendants and a panel of my peers at the Southeastern Music Conference, I voiced my opinion on how bands could attain higher visibility through persistence with patience. Attitude counts for a lot in this business. If someone doesn't write about your band, play your song or give you that spot on that bill, don't get pissed off and cop an attitude. Trust me, it will get you nowhere but at the end of the line. The easiest way to be remembered in this business is to make a bad impression because they last forever. All you can do is get out there in these people's faces and make them take notice. If what you have is worth something, people will eventually figure that out for themselves and give you the respect you deserve.

Now here's a little story about an incident that I experienced last year in town. I will never forget the response that I got from a few select individuals when I dared to attend the *Players* Anniversary Party last December at the Rock-It Club. I'll admit I had an interest in what kind of a draw the event would get (*THRUST* had thrown a successful party there two months before), but I also wanted to see Manitoba's Wild Kingdom. Quite honestly, I was surprised to find the place packed, especially since the event was held only two days after Christmas. I even went up and shook Bill Templeton's (*Players*' publisher) hand and said, "Nice party."

He said, "Thanks." I often wonder if he even knew who I was. The point is, the guy was cool to me as an individual, and aside from the obvious politics in the air between our two organizations, I respect the man for what he does. I've got to tell you though, I couldn't believe how many morons came up to me and said, "Hey man, what are you doing here?" like I was some kind of an idiot. I was there because I wanted to be there and I had as much of a right to be there as anybody else. By the way, I enjoyed the party. What I'm trying to get across here in the midst of all this seemingly senseless babble is that, maybe we could all loosen up a little. Many of us industry "professionals" from the area are so uptight that we can't combine efforts in the least to help the music scene. The truth is, the people that we're hurting through our petty indifferences are the ones that have provided us with these positions of power.

In closing, I'd like to say that for all of the ins and outs of this business, I honestly love the music itself and the people that share that love with me. If you don't love it and you're not willing to deal with the everyday hassles, it's very possible that you could be in the wrong profession. Really though, what are you going to do, sell shoes or dig ditches? No, you're going to keep on doing what you do and make the best of this crazy business because, chances are, you probably love it as much as I do. Right?

don't know if it's the saturation of local and national acts coming through or just an in general state of apathy but you people need to make your presence known. If you like a band, get off of the couch one of these nights and go see them live where it counts. And when you're there and the band plays, after they've finished maybe it wouldn't hurt to take your hands out of your pockets and clap. Let them know that you're alive or haven't dosed off in the middle of their set, they'll surely appreciate it. And instead of trying to bum a shirt or tape off of someone who works a day job and plays music at night, put your hand back in your pocket after you're done clapping. Remember, support the local scene or it will go away. Go to the clubs, see these bands and let them know that they have your support and appreciation.

OK, now back to the bands themselves. It's almost become a part of my job to listen to the continual complaints of how some other band is getting a song on the radio, how some other band is getting an opening slot at some national show or how some other band is getting covered in one of the mags. You know what I say? So what? Sure there's an extensive degree of favoritism and political piracy going on here, but what do you accomplish with all of this moaning and groaning? Face it, politics and favoritism have been around a lot longer than you or I and they probably will be here long after we're gone.

Patience is a word that most of us could afford to look up in the dictionary. I talk to bands continuously at the clubs that want me to listen to their tape (I do), they want me to come to their shows (I try), and they want to be covered in one of the mags that I write for. Sure, this is completely understandable, but you wouldn't believe the amount of acts that I've given my card to who can't find the time to call or drop something in the mail. Some of



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# The Last Word by John Urban

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## UNCOVERING THE HARD FACTS IN TAMPA BAY

I want to thank the bands, 98 Rock and everyone who attended my Last Word Anniversary party at the Rock-It Club for making it a big success. I was relying on a lot of people to pull it off and they all came through. A good crowd was already in full effect by the time ST. WARREN started the party at ten o'clock, and they delivered a consistently professional show. CAST OF NASTIES were in rare form and proved once and for all that they are back for good. They even invited me to play bass with them on an obnoxious version of the Sex Pistols' "No Feelings" while vamp bassist Beckie Chambers sang lead. The BELLE VUE BOYZ closed the show, and licked, stuck and sent the crowd on their way. All three of these acts were chosen because they have what it takes to make it; you can expect to hear a lot more from them. The only bummer of the show was the last minute cancellation by the GYPSY BANG GANG ... so we will have to wait and see what they have to offer. Other than that, I had more fun that night than I've had in a long time and will have to come up with another excuse to throw another party at the Rock-It Club soon.

By now everyone has heard the big news that Kenny McGee has left JULLIET to join HEARTLESS. This is of special interest to me, since Kenny was one of the first people I met when I moved from Cleveland to Florida nine or ten years ago. At that time, Kenny was a guitar player in a circuit band called NO THANX. After that, he formed another club act named GANGSTER, with SAVATAGE bassist Johnny Middleton and the late, original ROXX GANG guitarist Eric Carroll. Both McGee and Middleton later joined an already established touring act called LEFTY, where Kenny later became the lead vocalist. He transformed that unit into one of the most popular bands of that era. This led to his role in Julliet, which seemed to be a promising band but was held back by the downfall of their record company. Kenny has been a veteran of the local scene for as long as I have, and hopefully his new position in Heartless will award him the recognition he deserves. Don't expect to see the new Heartless playing the clubs around town very often. Kenny told me that they will play only one show — April 27th at the Rock-It Club — and then they will move to L.A. He also said that they don't plan to play any material from Julliet's debut album, but will perform and record songs Kenny wrote that would have been on Julliet's second album ... had he stayed in the band. And according to Kenny,

Julliet has recruited ex-AUTODRIVE frontman Jimmy Murdock; they will be pursuing a more commercial direction.

When I published the final issue of my original *Last Word* Fanzine a year and a half ago, I dedicated an entire page to a new band called SAPIA, whom I had discovered. This

for CRY WOLF, and found them to be unlike any other act in town. Musically, the style of their compositions is very intricate and melodic. Garren studies jazz at USF, and those influences seem to be the base of his playing style. He also uses some unique percussive techniques which I have never seen nor heard

what makes me believe they might be the next Bay area band to get signed. This guy has the makings of a major act frontman. He's got the image, confidence, as well as an amazing vocal range. Their demo, consisting of the songs "Tomorrow's Light," "Don't Let Me Down," "Rise Again," and "Evermore," displays both his musical abilities as a vocalist ... and more importantly, his vast use of emotions. This is one band you don't want to miss, so check them out. Keep in mind that their approach may go over a lot of heads on first listen, so it might take a few times to realize the full effect.

CASPION is one of many bands that are now recording at AMERICAN MUSIC WORKS STUDIOS. As a matter of fact, several of the Bay's most talked about acts, including HEARTLESS, UNCLE SALLY and THE BLEEDING HEARTS have made the switch. (Bleeding Hearts' "Loaded Gun," which is on rotation on 98 Rock, was recorded there.) One of the main reasons for this is due to the godly reputation of engineer DOUG JOHNSTON. As Caspian guitarist Wes Garren explains it, "Doug gets the band to sound like themselves and captures their identity on tape as opposed to giving them a stock sound." The studio was opened by Charles Klimp around five years ago, and Doug Johnston has previously worked with London Studios in Tampa. I immediately became impressed with his work after hearing his production on Saber's Motion's N' Time CD. I felt this to be of national album quality, and Johnston's work since then has established my faith in his ear and ability to work with bands on an equal level without dominating their sessions and making them do things they don't want ... or make them sound like someone else. Some other bands that record at A.M.W. include CAST OF NASTIES, KRUNCH, ARAZMO, GARDY-LOO and PSYCHO TRIBE. If your act is considering recording a demo, you should call Amer. Music Works at 527-9565.

Finally, Florida metal scene pioneer NASTY RONNIE (formerly of NASTY SAVAGE) is back in action. Lately he has spent most of his time pursuing professional wrestling management. He has formed the Sunshine Wrestling Alliance (aka SWA), with professional wrestler Jeff "Playboy" James. But now he is finally putting together a new project, and looking for musicians to jam with. If you think you are nasty enough, contact Nasty Ronnie, P.O. Box 3021, Brandon, Florida 34299.

Last Word to your mother. Yep, yep, yep.



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group was to feature vocalist Scott Sapia (ex-singer of SABER and MISSION CONTROL) and members of an impressive instrumental band named SIDE SEVEN that had been blowing people away at scattered showcases around town. I wanted to be the first journalist to write about them because I could see their potential, but unfortunately that band never made it out of the rehearsal hall ... or so I thought. After eight months in the planning the new version of that project, known as CASPIAN, has emerged. Sapia is still fronting the band, and the entire Side Seven line-up consisting of guitarist Wes Garren, bassist Jim Cloversetle and drummer Don Young. I think we've got something here. I saw the band open

before. But, unlike a lot of technical players whose playing I find to be very cold, Garren's playing has a warm, optimistic feeling that is hard to explain. At one time he told me that his previous instrumental band was a Christian group. This seemed strange to me because I didn't know how anyone would be able to tell they were Christian if their songs didn't have lyrics. Now I understand that even without words, the message still comes across. Cloversetle's bass playing is equally impressive, and he is one of the few bassists I've heard that plays fluent leads on bass without losing that solid groove that separates great bass players from bass/wannabe guitar players. But the band's union with vocalist Scott Sapia is

## BEHIND BARS

There once was a boy who had Swiss army knives for fingers. He scored gigs around the neighborhood cutting hair and trimming bush. But being emotionally unstable the demands caused him to freak out.



by John Urban

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for my hemorrhoids?

To be  
continued...

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ATTENTION!!! HELP distribute THRUST in trade for ad space. For Details contact Jeff Vitolo at (813) 536-4100. It's a great way to promote your band or business.

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All categories are free for the first 20 words for the categories listed at right. Free placement may run in either Florida or Georgia but not both. Free ads

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Jobs Wanted  For Sale/ Misc.  Musicians Available  Musicians Wanted  Personal

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